

Register Vernon Honored

BANQUET TO HON. W. T. VERNON, REGISTER OF THE TREASURY.

WASHINGTON'S LATEST AND GREATEST SOCIAL FUNCTION.

Much Credit Is Due to the Committee Who Arranged, and to the Citizens Who Attended and Who Honored Themselves in Thus Honoring a Man Who Is Proving Himself Worthy of the Confidence of the Citizens Who Endorsed and the President Who Appointed Him to a Position of Trust and Honor in the Nation.

Washington is the center of political life of the nation, but it is no less the center of the social life and activity. Here meet and mingle the best men and the brightest minds that the country can produce, and here, in the last analysis, must be wrought out the final result in all the great questions which confront the American people.

It is but natural then, that all the great national characters should, from choice or from necessity, select the nation's capital as the center of their active operations. Here have these characters worked and struggled, and here have they been crowned with success or crushed by defeat.

Not since the days of Douglas, however, has there been a function so propitious in its harmony and unanimity, and at the same time so wide in its scope, representing so well in its personnel all classes of citizens and all sections of the country, as the banquet tendered the 31st ultimo to the present Register of the Treasury, Hon. W. T. Vernon of Kansas.

The Odd Fellows Hall, in which the function was held, was resplendent with patriotic decorations, among which were tastefully interwoven the emblems of Kansas, while conspicuous among the beautiful table decorations smiled in majesty the sunlit hues of the golden sunflower opening wiled its bloom in a consciousness of freedom so characteristic of the spirit of Kansas and the Great West.

In the center of the South end of the hall, from a raised platform and concealed by palms, the Lyric Orchestra of Howard University discoursed sweet music throughout the evening. Reaching from this platform as an apex the table, in the shape of a huge "V," stretched away to the northeast and northwest corners of the hall. At the apex of the "V" and thus in plain view of every guest sat the guest of honor. On one side was the toastmaster, Mr. William L. Houston, Grand Master of the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows, and Rev. Oscar J. W. Scott, one of Mr. Vernon's staunchest friends, delivered the welcome address, instead of Dr. E. W. Lampton, who, all regretted to learn, was confined at home ill, and on the other side of Mr. Vernon sat Hon. John C. Dancy, Recorder of Deeds, who spoke to the subject "Our Guest." Around the table, grouped by States in alphabetical order, sat the banqueters, representing twenty-five States, the District of Columbia, and Canada. They represented States from Massachusetts to Texas. Many came with their grips in their hands direct from the station, but every participant was in the hall by eight o'clock, the hour announced for beginning.

At each plate was a beautiful combined menu and souvenir program, unique in its conception and beautiful in its workmanship. It represented a bond of the United States, and was done in the colors of the United States Treasury notes. The vignette in the center was a likeness of Hon. W. T. Vernon, while the panels on either side contained the menu and the program. To the right and left below the vignette were scrolls, one containing a full-blown sunflower, the other a ripened ear of corn bursting from its husk in the fullness of its fruitage. Above an arch supported by two Corinthian columns was the inscription "Bond of a United People," and below the motto of Kansas, "Ad Astra Per Aspera." Below the picture was the signature of Mr. Vernon. The Printing Committee, under

the chairmanship of Mr. W. A. Joiner, and the young men at the Armstrong School, who worked out the details, certainly deserve the credit of having the most unique and beautiful souvenir program and menu that we have yet seen. The program carried also the names of the guests present, and will serve as a happy reminder of a delightful evening.

Mr. Bray, who was in charge of the work of arranging the program, must most heartily be commended upon his selection of high-grade speakers and live subjects, and no speaker attempted to trespass upon the rights of another by long-drawn-out deliverances. The speeches were all bright, witty, thoughtful and to the point, and the number kept within the limits of excellent judgment.

The cosmopolitan nature of the affair and the general popularity of Register Vernon is well attested by the geographic distribution of the men interested in extending him this mark of honor: Dr. Lampton represents Mississippi; Rev. Scott, Mr. Bray, Kansas; Mr. Lankford, Missouri; Mr. Stewart, Tennessee; Mr. Layton, District of Columbia, and Mr. Joiner, Illinois.

Of the speakers Mr. Houston represented Kentucky; Dr. Board, Ohio; Mr. Waller, New York; Mr. Greener, New York; Mr. Hewlett, Massachusetts; Dr. Moore, Pennsylvania; Mr. Terrell, District of Columbia; Dr. Curtis, Illinois; Mr. Moten, Virginia, and Mr. Dancy hails from North Carolina.

When the guests had taken their places at the table the presiding officer entered the hall with Mr. Vernon upon his arm, and escorted him to his place at the head of the table, amid a generous burst of applause. When the guests had been seated, Rev. O. J. W. Scott arose and in a few well-chosen words welcomed the banqueters. He then read a letter from Dr. E. W. Lampton, explaining his detention at home by illness and his regret at not being able to welcome them in person, as had been his ardent desire.

MENU.	
Pickles	Olives
Bouillon	
Blue Points on the Half Shell.	
Rock Fish, Boiled.	
New Potatoes, Creamed.	
Fillet of Beef	Mushroom Sauce.
Roast Turkey, Cranberry Sauce.	
Tomato Salad.	
Ice Cream.	Cake.
Orangeade.	
Black Coffee.	
Cheese	Crackers.
Cigars.	

As the feast of viands was nearing a close Toastmaster Houston arose and announced that the feast of reason was yet to be served, and with a delightful introductory speech presented Dr. W. L. Board, who captivated his hearers in a few minutes by the masterly manner in which he set forth the various wants of the race, and pointed out that we want the highest and the best that there is in the civilization of which we are a part. He insisted that we know what we want, and "We want what we want when we want it."

Hon. John L. Waller, late captain in the Twenty-third Kansas, responded to the toast, "Citizen and Soldier," and traced the part that the Negro has taken in the military achievements of his country from the first blood of the Revolution, when Crispus Attucks gave his life to set in motion the fight for freedom, down to the war with Spain. As Attucks had been first in the Revolution, so Nicholas Biddle, a Negro with the First Pennsylvania troops, had been the first to shed his blood for the preservation of the Union, having been wounded by the mob as his regiment passed through Baltimore on its way to the defense of the Capital. That he has fought gallantly in the more recent conflicts is a matter of common knowledge.

As a citizen he has ever been true to the trust reposed in him and has never been known to vote on the wrong side of an issue, so as citizen he has amply proven his right to the highest gratitude and recognition of the nation.

Hon. Richard T. Greener spoke on "Colonial Expansion," setting forth in

clear and convincing style the drift of the present policy of America in colonial matters. Mr. Greener is one of the ablest men of the race.

Judge E. M. Hewlett, in discussing "Our Political Duty," thought it strange that we should be compelled to ask what is our duty; yet such was the case under the peculiar conditions in America. Among other things he pointed out that we must learn to hold race above self; cease fighting one another, and attack the common enemy; contend for every manhood right.

Judge R. H. Terrell, in discoursing on "Race Unity," called attention to the peculiar heritage that the race had received from slavery, which was especially calculated to weaken and destroy race unity, and he hailed the gathering before him as an evidence that this envy, strife, and jealousy were passing away. "And if this be true," said the Judge, "blessed be this night." Quoting Frederick Douglass, he reminded his hearers that greatness does not come to any people on flowery beds of ease.

Dr. L. B. Moore, responding to the toast "Educational Ideals," urged up-

onmost soul be laid bare in this splendid presence, how infinitesimally small by such comparison would seem my attempt to express these promptings.

I came to you a stranger, to assume the duties of the office to which I had been appointed, realizing that such an appointment was more than a personal elevation. It carried with it representation for the race, and hence great responsibilities calling for the best effort of any man. I assure you that my efforts have been to measure up to these responsibilities in a way which would please, not only superiors, but all the people of this great country without regard to color. If my conduct has been such as to find favor and approval, then, I feel more than repaid, and these words of yours tonight, and this testimonial will serve to encourage me to greater effort to perform my duties faithfully in the future as I have attempted to do in the past.

This is a most generous act, and I may say now that I have the kindest feelings for all of the elements that I have met since coming here, and which have all treated me with



REGISTER WILLIAM TECUMSEH VERNON.

on these representatives of the race the necessity for high ideals. He spoke of the changing viewpoints of education from the early history of education as a science and art, and showed that from each system only the best could survive to enrich and broaden succeeding systems. The Negro must have the best that his day and generation offers him, nothing less must be accepted. No education will suffice for him save that one which will open before him every walk of life and make him in intellect and character the peer of the highest and best American citizen.

Dr. A. M. Curtis, in a masterly address, summed up the "Essentials of Progress," and Hon. J. C. Dancy, after giving a short account of the early life of Hon. W. T. Vernon and paying a splendid tribute to his prowess and ability, with the eloquence for which he is noted, introduced him as the guest of honor.

In responding Mr. Vernon, who was greeted with great applause from time to time, spoke in part as follows: Mr. Toastmaster and Gentlemen:

I am sure that I can not fittingly express my appreciation of this testimonial of esteem and regard which you have given me.

The eloquent words of congratulation and compliment which the speakers of the evening have seen fit to utter regarding me appeal to me in a way which no words of mine can fully describe. Words are but feeble things—they mean so little when the heart holds so much, and I assure you, that could the promptings of my

uniform courtesy and kindness. To sum it up, I want to be everybody's Register of everybody's Treasury.

My earliest recollection of life is of a log cabin and a dirt floor, but way down there I had some ambitions to occupy a place in life which would be worth while—not may I say with a selfish purpose, but I believe he who would help others must first raise himself. His elevation will bring with it some influence fitted to assist those of his fellows with whom he comes in contact.

I speak the truth when I say that no man does his full duty, no matter how elevated who does not consider his duty to others quite as much as to himself.

I realize that here tonight we have in you, that of brain and character, fitted to fill any place to which fortune may elevate you—to perform any duty which fate may assign. In the midst of a personnel such as this I hesitate to enter into any discussion which tends to moralizing. I can not say that which has been unsaid, nor think that which has been unthought by some or all of you, and yet these seemingly impertinent platitudes with regard to duty to the race and fellow men, I trust will not be considered gratuitous.

Such an occasion as this is splendid for getting together on common ground for the best interest of those whom we represent.

While public office is a public trust, and all so situated should realize it, the Negro in office should realize that there is much for him to do which the most generous statement can not

comprehend. Aside from a faithful performance of the duties assigned him, he should maintain an especial interest in his people.

To no set of men does leadership bring greater responsibilities than to the Negro leader. The masses trust him implicitly, and for these we should think and labor.

It will be a splendid day for the race when the leaders shall lose sight of minor differences and agree upon broader lines which make for the common good. To say that we should all think alike on public policies is to argue against nature or to imply a blind fatuity which abject subservience to one would mean; but that, on the essentials we should agree, no one will deny.

In standing for each other we stand for the race. No jealousies nor envies should cause us to withhold from each other, that which any one deserves. At the same time honest criticism of one's public acts should not be mistaken for enmity, for until time is not men of bold and virile mentality in their zeal for the accomplishment of those things which they think best, will at times seemingly propagate divergent views with the

One of the most serious causes for alarm as I see it, is the intemperate criticism which at times we heap upon each other, and the holding up to the gaze of the world of the weaknesses which some of our greatest men, as well as the masses may possess. This is no argument nor apology for wrong doing, but is inspired by the feeling that it is always better to see good than ill in one's fellow man. This principle, making for the betterment of all mankind, means much, especially to a people whose antecedents would invite if not force some imperfections.

Unity of purpose and unity of thought, rather than a contrariwise movement on the part of those who see the light, will make for a sure and lasting better day.

That a race should have opposition as well as an individual indicates progress, but shall we cease our efforts for progress because of opposition? Not so—to correct that which is of wrong within the race—to emphasize the right and the better things which the Negro has done is a duty which we must not neglect.

I believe that a large proportion of the Negro leaders are striving heartily for that which they conceive to be best, and hence I do not purposely take issue with men *per se*, but state my views as I see the situation.

I believe that the wisest statesmanship will finally conclude that injustice to any of our citizens is indeed harmful to the government, for the reason that patriotism arising from intelligent appreciation of the real greatness of the Republic, is the real safeguard of the country. Such patriotism is best fostered by the protection and splendid opportunities which only exact justice can afford.

The doctrine of self-government was a new pronouncement in the annals of the world. It was a protest against the injustice of centuries—against caste distinction and disregard of law. The remarkable mission upon which America started at the outset of our national career has been the mainspring of the most phenomenal success of the greatest Republic in the world's history. The high and lofty purpose of carry out this mission actuated the Fathers.

Governments, as individuals, must not forget the purposes for which Providence has created them. Let it not be said of us that in our efforts to secure the things of earth, we neglected soul virtues, chief among which are brotherhood, and due consideration of the rights of man. We are commanded to "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world * * * for the world passeth away and the lusts thereof."

In this materialistic age it will be sad for us, if the things of the soul, which have to do with human rights, liberty and enlightened conscience, lofty endeavors, and inspired purposes are all forgotten, and the sordid things—the lusts of earth, the quest for power shall seduce us from the hitherto splendid aim of this mighty nation.

The best man of both races must

understand each other better. In a Republic there can be no lord and vassal, no master and slave, no ruler and serf, but the regency of conscience in the final analysis must preserve our cherished institutions.

I am no pessimist. I have an abiding faith in the triumph of right and the all conquering strength of justice. The eternal verities have no fleeting existence but are of the ceaseless ages.

When the trials, the disheartenings and the misunderstandings which now obtain shall know the oblivion which is always the part of wrong, equal and exact justice will be accorded to all men.

The affair was in charge of the following committees:

Executive Committee—Rev. E. W. Lampton, chairman; Rev. O. J. W. Scott, Jos. H. Stewart, Paul H. Bray, J. A. Lankford, Wm. A. Joiner, John T. Layton.

Committee on Arrangements—J. A. Lankford, J. H. Stewart, P. H. Bray.

Committee on Program—Paul H. Bray, W. A. Joiner, J. H. Stewart.

Executive Committee—Rev. E. W. Lampton, chairman; Joseph H. Stewart, J. A. Lankford, John T. Layton.

Committee on Invitation—W. A. Joiner, P. H. Bray, J. A. Lankford.

Committee on Music—John T. Layton.

Committee on Printing.—W. A. Joiner, M. S. Wormley, B. C. Dodson.

Among those present were:

Alabama—B. Frank Morrison, Ira Bryant.

Arizona—B. B. Spikes.

Canada (Toronto)—W. W. Plummer.

Colorado—John H. Paynter.

District of Columbia—Thomas H. R. Clark, Daniel Hardy, P. W. Price, Dr. George W. Cabaniss, Prof. J. Henry Lewis, Prof. James Clark, Dr. Wilson Bruce Evans, Mr. Charles T. Neal, James Miles, James M. Frac-tion, M.D., Judge Robert H. Terrell, J. W. Gray, E. Murray, William Jan-ifer, Joseph H. Stewart, R. W. Tompkins, John T. Layton, Dr. J. C. Dowling, W. L. Pollard, R. C. Bruce, W. Calvin Chase, George W. Cook, C. H. Hale, J. W. Cromwell, A. C. Newman, Alphonso Harris, John C. Nalle, Rev. A. Garner, Garrett C. Wilkin-son, L. N. Beckett, A. L. Gaines, Rev. W. R. Arnold.

Florida—Robert L. Pendleton, Dr. H. C. Scurlock, W. T. Menard.

Georgia—W. J. Decatur, William H. Sykes, Daniel G. Monroe.

Indiana—George W. Jackson.

Illinois—Walter Dyson, Frank A. Byron, Dr. A. M. Curtis, Cyrus F. Adams, William A. Joiner, James A. Cobb.

Iowa—J. Frank Blagburn.

Kansas—George C. Smith, Paul H. Bray, Charles N. Barker, S. N. Gray, A. S. Gray, Rev. A. Barton, John L. Waller, Jr., Daniel Brooks.

Kentucky—William L. Houston, Grand Master United Order Odd Fel-lows; Henry P. Slaughter.

Massachusetts—Judge E. M. Hewlett, Dr. E. D. Scott.

Missouri—A. E. Lankford, Rev. O. J. W. Scott, J. A. Lankford.

Michigan—Robert Pelham.

Maryland—Rev. J. T. Jenifer, Rev. D. G. Hill, John H. Murphy, Dr. W. A. Warfield, Rev. John Hurst.

Mississippi—Dr. E. W. Lampton.

New York—Lewis H. Douglass, W. H. Grimshaw, Capt. John L. Waller, Richard T. Greener, ex-Consul Vladivostock.

New Jersey—E. F. Arnold.

North Carolina—James D. Pair, Rev. E. H. Hunter, Dr. E. D. Wil-liston, Hon. John C. Dancy, Recorder of ceds; James E. Shepherd.

Ohio—Mr. William H. Conner, Dr. William L. Foard, R. E. S. Hoomey, Neval H. Thomas, Albertus Brown, A. H. Glenn, Rev. S. N. Brown.

Pennsylvania—Prof. L. B. Moore, Dean Teachers' College, Howard Uni-versity; Rev. John H. Burke.

South Carolina—Thomas West, J. O. Bampfield.

Tennessee—Elias S. Webb, Prof. W. H. Richards.

Texas—E. L. Scott.

Virginia—Major Robert Russa Mo-ton, Commandant Hampton Institute; W. R. Griffin, W. H. C. Brown, Geo. W. Mays, L. H. Reynolds, F. M.

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